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Threat Of 'Spying' High-Rise Near CIA Site Blocked Again

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The threat of high-rise luxury apartments overlooking the super-secret Central Intelligence Agency headquarters near McLean was fended off, probably for another year, as the result of Fairfax County Planning Commission action Thursday night.

The 11-acre tract, held by Alexandria developer Robert L. Travers, borders the CIA site on the east and was rejected for apartment zoning by the county supervisors a little more than a year ago.

At that time the developer, through his attorney, Bernard M. Fagelson, also of Alexandria, promised the proposed apartments would feature a blank and windowless wall facing the CIA as a precaution against binocular-equipped spies who might be tempted to take advantage of the project's strategic location.

Thursday night the planners recommended rejecting Travers' request without even hearing citizen objections to the rezoning. The planners did, however, read three letters of opposition into the record, including one from the CIA and let-

ters from the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Bureau of

Public Roads, agencies which described themselves as "interested parties" to the project.

The CIA letter, signed by R. L. Bannerman, the agency's deputy director for support, urged the commissioners to continue maintaining the rural character of the Langley area in order to preserve the CIA's "relative isolation" in its one-acre minimum lot surroundings.

In other zoning action, the planners recommended favorably on behalf of a 23-acre townhouse development proposed on a tract along Woodburn Road south of Fairfax Hospital.

The project, submitted by the VAL Corporation and presented to the commission by former supervisor Robert C. Cotten, represented a compromise from garden apartment development originally proposed on the land but violently objected to by citizens of the nearby Camelot and Pine Ridge subdivisions.

Citizens appeared Thursday night to speak on the development but tempered their opposition with the comment that they realized the developer had made a significant density cutback and pleaded with the planners to restrict further high development in their area if the VAL project were authorized.

About 200 townhouse units could be built on the property under current density restrictions in the county.

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